

January 12, 2021

Dear Club Presidents and Head Coaches;  
(This information can be circulated to all club members and coaches)

**RE: Swim Alberta Mental Health and Wellness Initiative**

Welcome to 2021 and I wish each of you a year that is healthy and productive and that you can find some peace amongst all that is happening in the world, including the global pandemic. It is appreciated that the restrictions currently in place in Alberta to protect the health of all Albertans, continues to create a swim season that is much different than what we have come to know as normal in previous years. To support this changing swim season and the needs of Swim Alberta membership, one of the areas of focus that we will be resourcing this year is a Mental Health and Wellness Initiative. This initiative will focus on four areas to help our swimming community learn more about mental health and wellness.

**Resource Page**

The Swim Alberta website now has a [Mental Health and Wellness](#) resource page available to coaches, athletes, parents and club administrators to gather information on mental health and wellness. This online resource includes professionals to reach out to, education opportunities (such as Mental Health First Aid), associations to contact and more. It will continually be updated with new information so our swimming community can grow and learn more about specific aspects of mental health and wellness. The list of mental health and wellness experts are professionally credited to work with coaches, athletes, teams, etc. and all have worked with Swim Alberta in the past with very positive results. Those requiring services can reach out to these experts on their own to establish best courses of action for the person or persons in need of mental health and wellness care and these professionals have the knowledge and expertise to guide those in need in a more clinical direction when required.

**Webinar and Education Series**

Swim Alberta will host a series of four (4) webinars in January 2021 to provide expertise on mental health and wellness for coaches, for younger teenagers (12-14 years), for older teenagers (15+ years) and for parents and/or Boards of Directors and other supporting adult members who would like to learn more to help support their athlete and/or themselves. The overall focus will be on coping skills and dealing with challenges through constant change knowing there is a light at the end of the tunnel in our sport. We will cap the athlete webinars to 75 registrations and will run a second webinar at a later date if there is oversubscription. Everyone matters and we will do our best to create that second opportunity. The webinar list is below and includes the registration links, please circulate to your members in a manner you deem appropriate:

***Coach Webinar*** – Saturday, January 16, 3pm

Registration Link: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4875437>

***Athletes Webinars*** – Saturday January 23, 10 AM & 12 PM (minors - Parents welcome to sit in)

Registration Link for 12–14 year old swimmers at 10 am: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4875441>

Registration Link for 15 and over swimmers at 12 noon: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4875463>

***Parents/Board of Directors Webinars*** – Sunday January 24, 3:00 PM

Registration Link: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4875443>

### **Mental Performance Plan**

Swim Alberta is also developing a Mental Performance Plan for registered swimmers and coaches in Alberta. Curriculum, programs and individualized mental performance needs are being researched to develop key areas to improve upon in the daily training environment as well as at selected competitions and training camps. While aspects of this area will be launched in the future when swimming has returned to more of what we knew of normal in the past, some aspects of the program will be available this year and communicated out to coaches at a later date.

### **Social Media**

In addition to the static resources that members can search or look for on the website, Swim Alberta will begin to build a social media presence around Mental Health and Wellness. This will involve circulations going to members to create a greater awareness on the importance of mental health/wellness and provide tools and resources to explore further some of the topics of interest. These will be targeted as needed to categories of membership through Mail Chimp, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

All members, including parents, athletes, coaches, administrators, and officials can sign-up to directly receive an information bulletin that will be sent out on a regular and as needed basis. Swim Alberta has automatically subscribed swim families to receive information bulletins on the Mental Health and Fitness Initiative. A communication will be sent out to all families later this week. The link to register for the information bulletin for those that may not have received it, can be found on the Swim Alberta website.

The future of Alberta swimmers is important. Swim Alberta recognizes the opportunity to help strengthen the mental fitness of our athletes and this will help strengthen and guide Alberta swimmers towards their goals both in and out of the water.

Coaches and Presidents with questions are encouraged to reach out to Swim Alberta staff. Jackie Cool, Sport Development Director ([jackie@swimalberta.ca](mailto:jackie@swimalberta.ca)) will be providing leadership to this initiative with the direct support of Stephen Norris, Technical Director ([snorris@swimalberta.ca](mailto:snorris@swimalberta.ca)).

Stay well and be safe.

Cheryl Humphrey  
Executive Director